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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 HANOI 000156

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

USDOC FOR SECRETARY EVANS
USDOC ALSO FOR 6500 AND 4431/MAC/AP/OKSA/VLC/HPPHO
STATE PASS USTR FOR EBRYAN
TREASURY FOR OASIA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [EFIS](#) [EAGR](#) [ECON](#) [ETRD](#) [VM](#)

SUBJECT: VIETNAM: MINISTER OF TRADE LETTER TO SECRETARY
EVANS EXPRESSES CONTINUING CONCERN OVER ANTIDUMPING CASE

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED - HANDLE ACCORDINGLY

[11.](#) (SBU) The Vietnamese Ministry of Trade has responded to Secretary of Commerce Evans' letter of December 12, 2002 with a letter from Minister of Trade Tuyen - text follows in para 2.

[12.](#) (SBU) Begin text of letter - original will not be forwarded:

(Informal Translation by MOT)

MINISTRY OF TRADE
The Socialist Republic of Vietnam

Hanoi, January 15, 2003

H.E. Mr. Donald L. Evans
Secretary of Commerce

SIPDIS
United States Department of Commerce

Dear Mr. Secretary,

I acknowledge with many thanks the receipt on 3rd January, 2003 of your letter dated 12th December, 2002.

It is obvious that we have different points of view regarding the market nature of Vietnam's economy. The Ministry of Trade of Vietnam will send its rebuttal comment on DOC's ME/NME conclusion of 8th November 2002 to you soon. I believe you and I have shared responsibility to help narrow our differences with a view to fostering Vietnam - US trade relations, thus promoting the multifaceted relations between the two countries toward the implementation of President Bush's initiative recently proposed to ASEAN leaders.

In this spirit, the Ministry of Trade expresses its great concerns over the attempts by a number of US domestic shrimp producers seeking unfair protection by abusing the US safeguard measures and anti-dumping laws to restrict shrimp imports from Vietnam and other countries. I would like to take this opportunity to reaffirm that Vietnam does not dump either shrimps or frozen Basa and Tra fish (catfish) filets into the US market. I would like, therefore, to respectfully ask you, in your high capacity, to handle the issues in a fair and just manner, to avoid any negative implication for the on-going fine development of the overall trade relations between the two countries against the backdrop of our historic BTA.

Regarding the DOC's ongoing investigation of the petition against certain frozen fish fillets from Vietnam, I would like to draw your attention to the active and constructive cooperation from the Vietnamese exporters concerned in providing fully and promptly within a short period of time all the information that the DOC has requested. They have made such enormous efforts with a strong belief that the DOC shall undertake a careful and accurate analysis and come at an impartial and fair conclusion of the case as the officials from your High Department have more than once assured to the Vietnamese government and businesses. Whereas we always highly appreciate these commitments, I would like to reiterate our hope to see those assurances in the Department's deeds. While we do not share the DOC's conclusion of NME status of Vietnam, I would like to restate our request that the DOC accept Bangladesh as the surrogate country should the DOC consider using a third country's data to estimate comparable production costs.

On the other hand, the Ministry of Trade of Vietnam has been informed of the US Department of Commerce's suggestion to consider a Suspension Agreement (SA), which was briefed to us by Mr. Joseph Spetrini, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Import Administration during his official trip to Hanoi in

the week of 17th December, 2002. I would like to stress, however, that the Vietnamese government and businesses involved would be in a position to consider this option only on the basis of a fair and accurate preliminary determination by the DOC to be made on 24th January, 2003. An unreasonably high tariff rate would be detrimental to the bilateral trade relations between our two countries in general and to the interests of both producers and consumers in particular, and therefore would be unacceptable to us. (EMBASSY NOTE: We checked this rather confusing translation but unfortunately, this paragraph was no clearer in the original Vietnamese and so we can offer no further clarification. END NOTE.)

It is my hope that my concerns will receive your kind consideration on the basis of constructive cooperation to the further development of Vietnam - US trade relations.

Looking forward to your positive respond, I would like to take this opportunity to renew to you, Mr. Secretary, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Sincerely yours,

Truong Dinh Tuyen
Minister of Trade of Vietnam

End Text.
PORTER